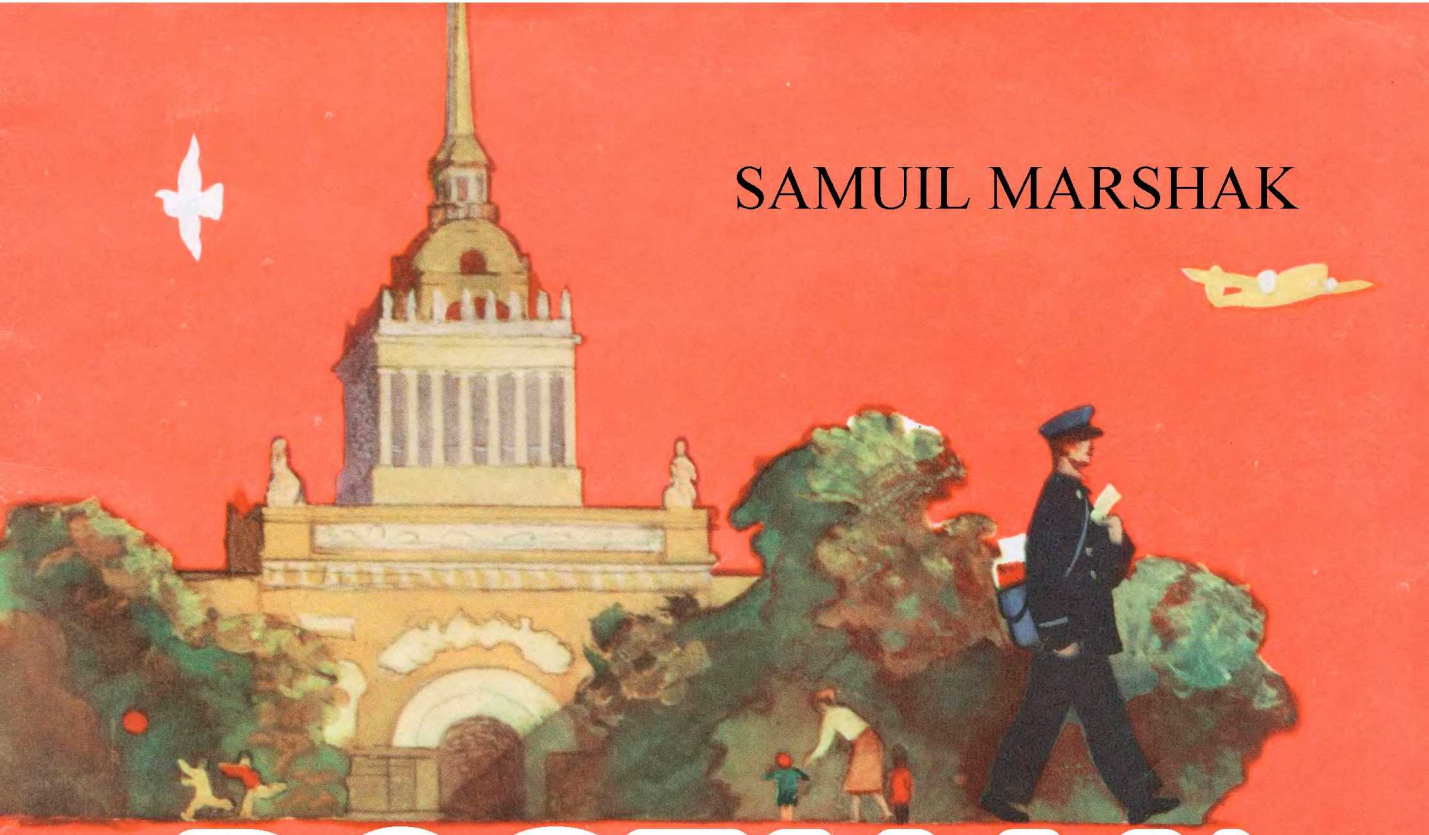
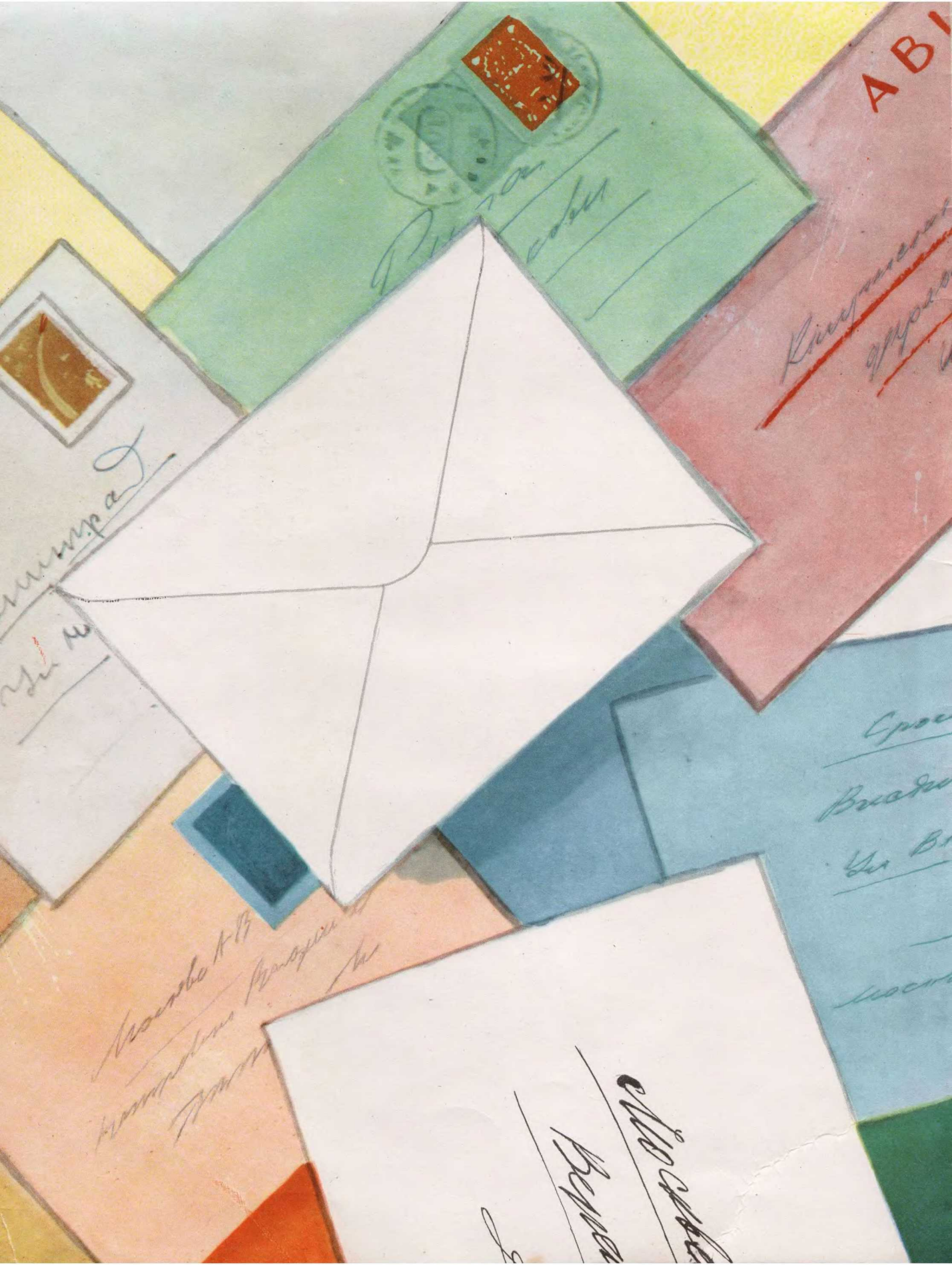
SAMUIL MARSHAK



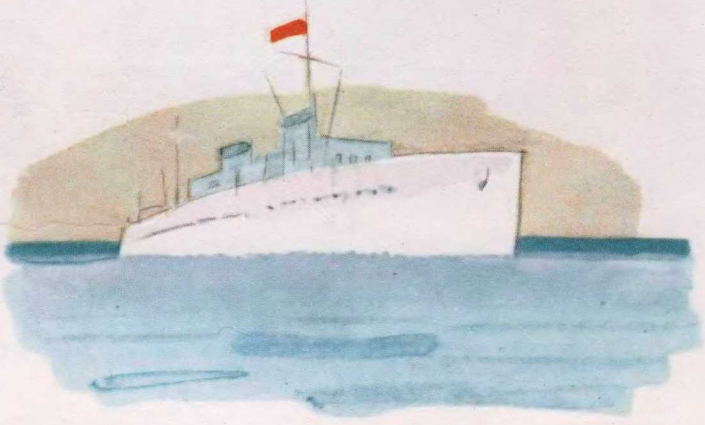
POSTMAN



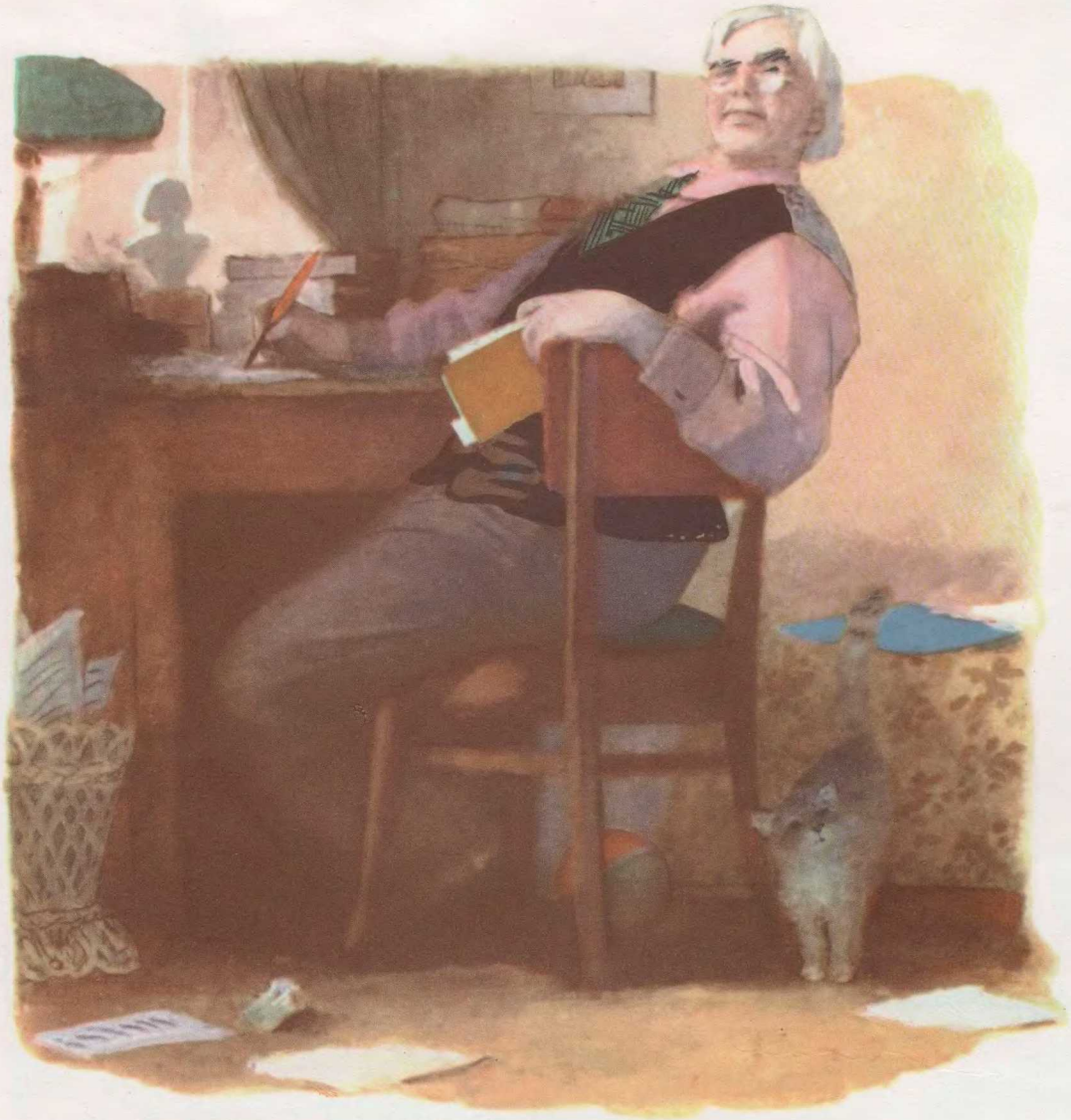
SAMUIL MARSHAK

POSTMAN

Illustrations by Juvenaly Korovin



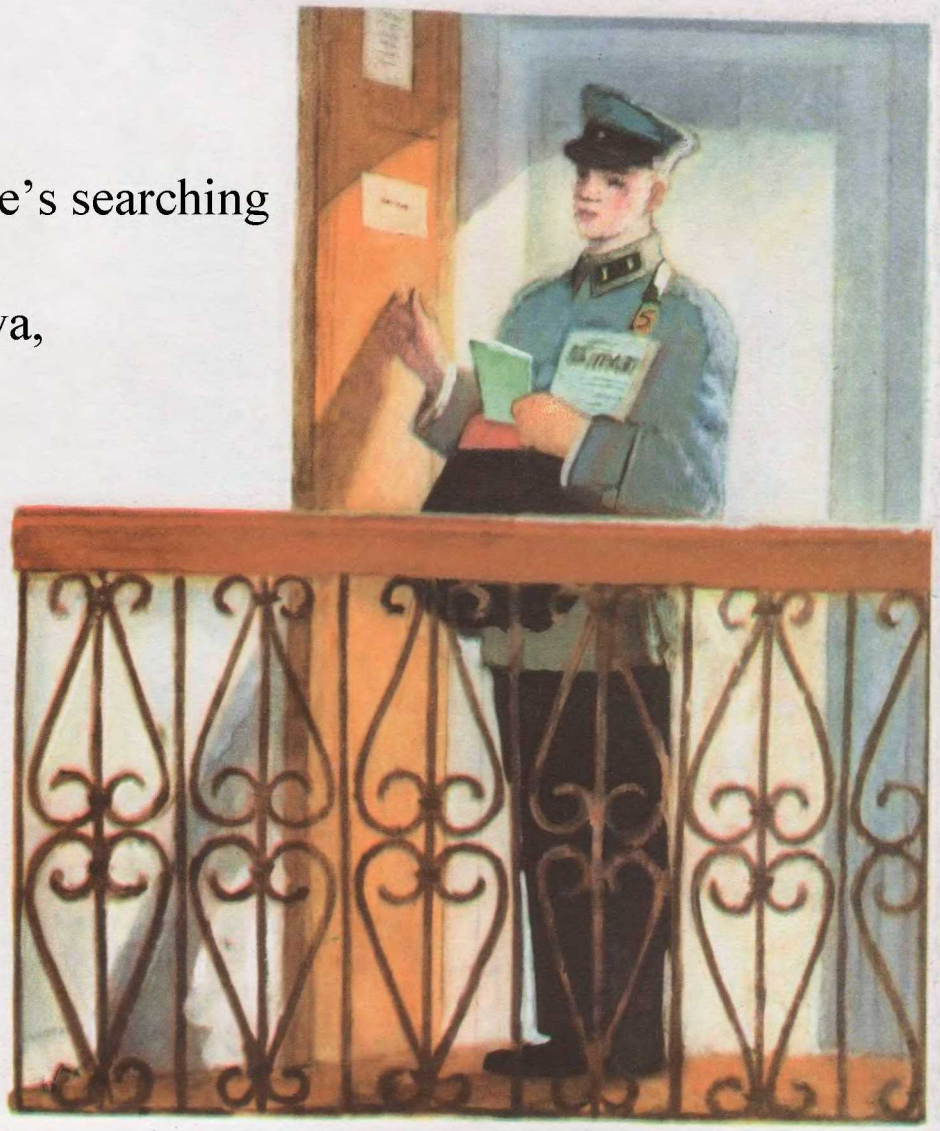
MINI PROGRESS & MINI RADUGA



1

Who is knocking at my door
With bag behind and badge before,
In Leningrad's official suit
Of navy blue from cap to boot?
It is he,
It is he,
Who brings the mail to you and me.

He has got
A lot
Of letters,
In the bag he's searching through,
From Poltava,
Kharkov,
Gorky,
Balaklava
And Baku.



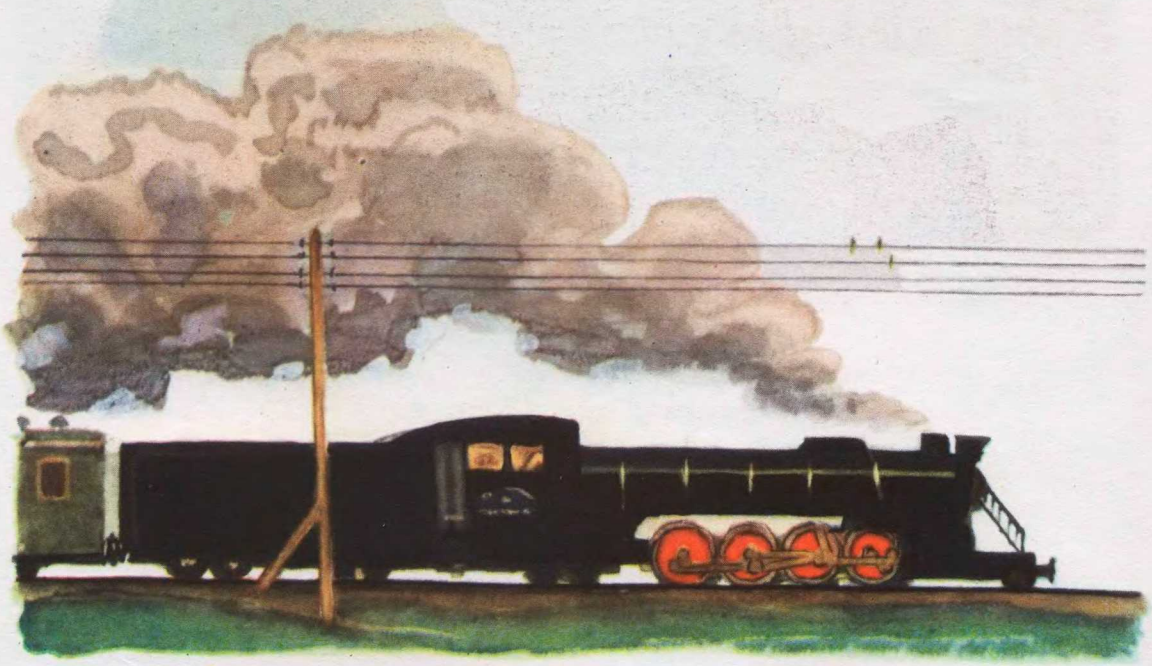
At seven o'clock his work begins,
At ten o'clock his bundle thins,
At twelve o'clock or half past one
The postman stops—his work is done.

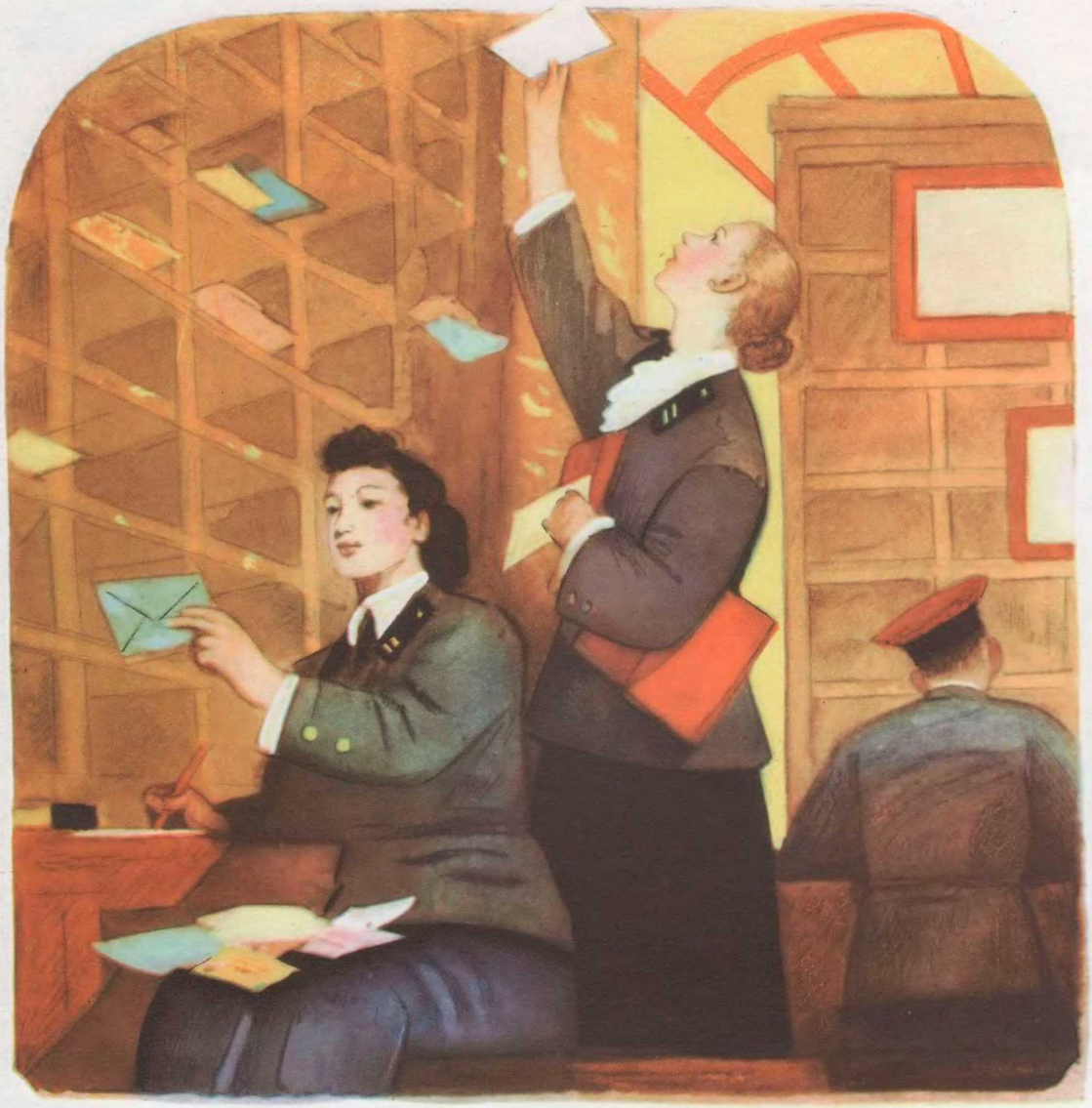
2

From Tula comes a Special for
Our friend Jitkov, who lives next door.
"A Special for the man next door?
He doesn't live here any more."
"You mean to say he went away?"
"He's in Berlin—but not to stay."

3

With everything ready,
The wind holding steady,
Jitkov left the country by air.
But soon on his trail
Went a train with the mail,
And his Special was found in its care.

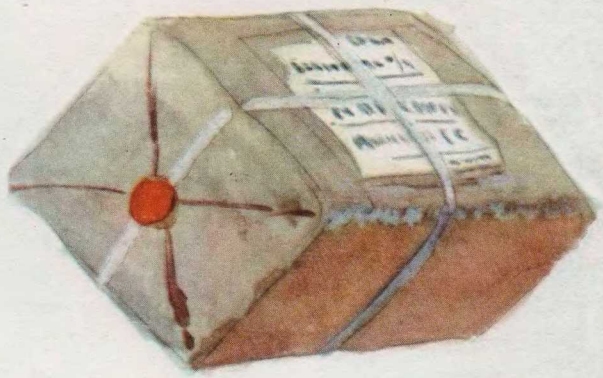




The packages neatly
Were sorted completely,
(Two postmen took care of the mails.)
They stamped them and stacked them,
Addressed them and packed them,
While bumping along on the rails.

A card—to Dubrovka,

A box—to Pokrovka,



A note—to the village of Klin.

A letter—to Menshall,

And also the Special
Addressed to our friend in Berlin.

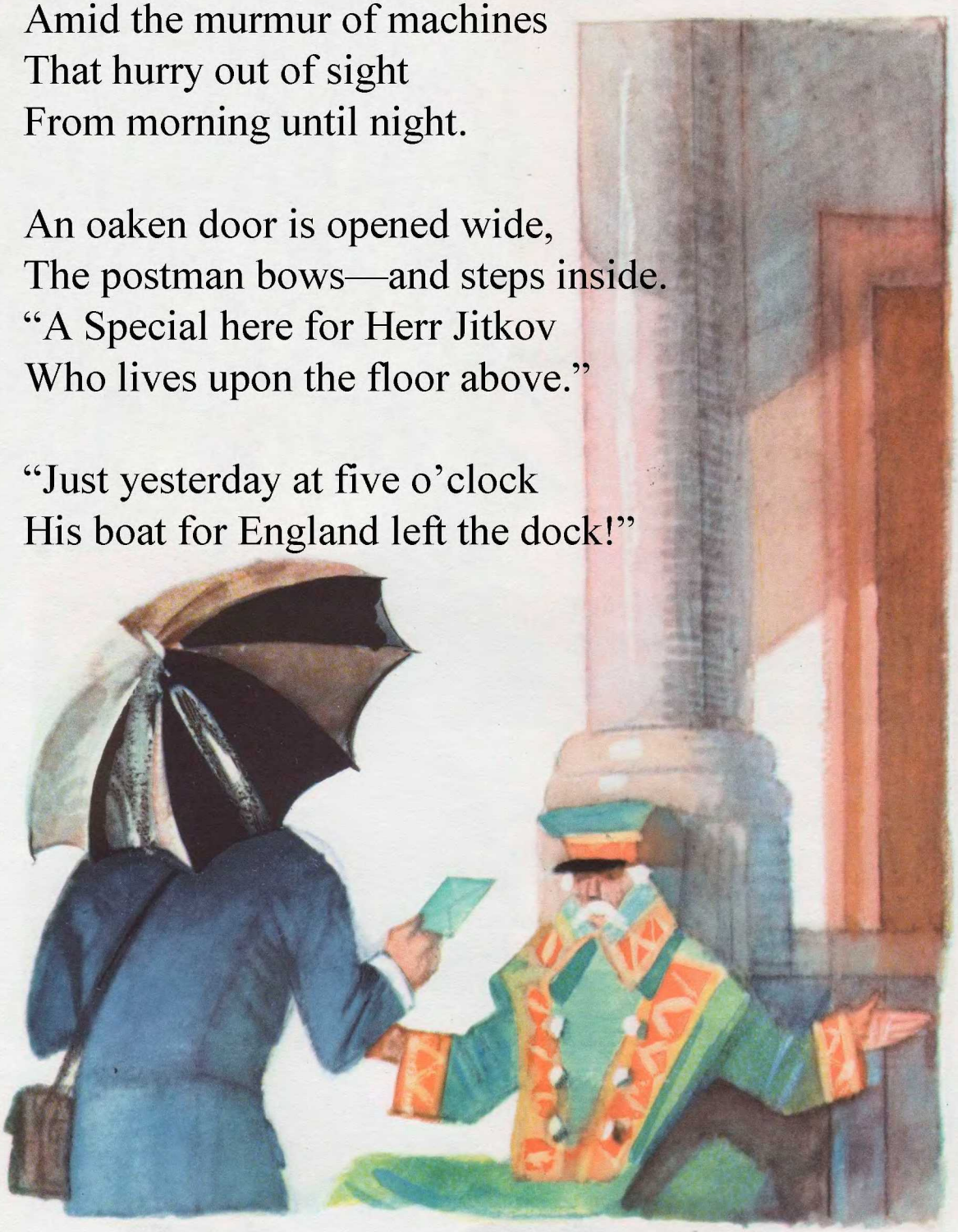
4

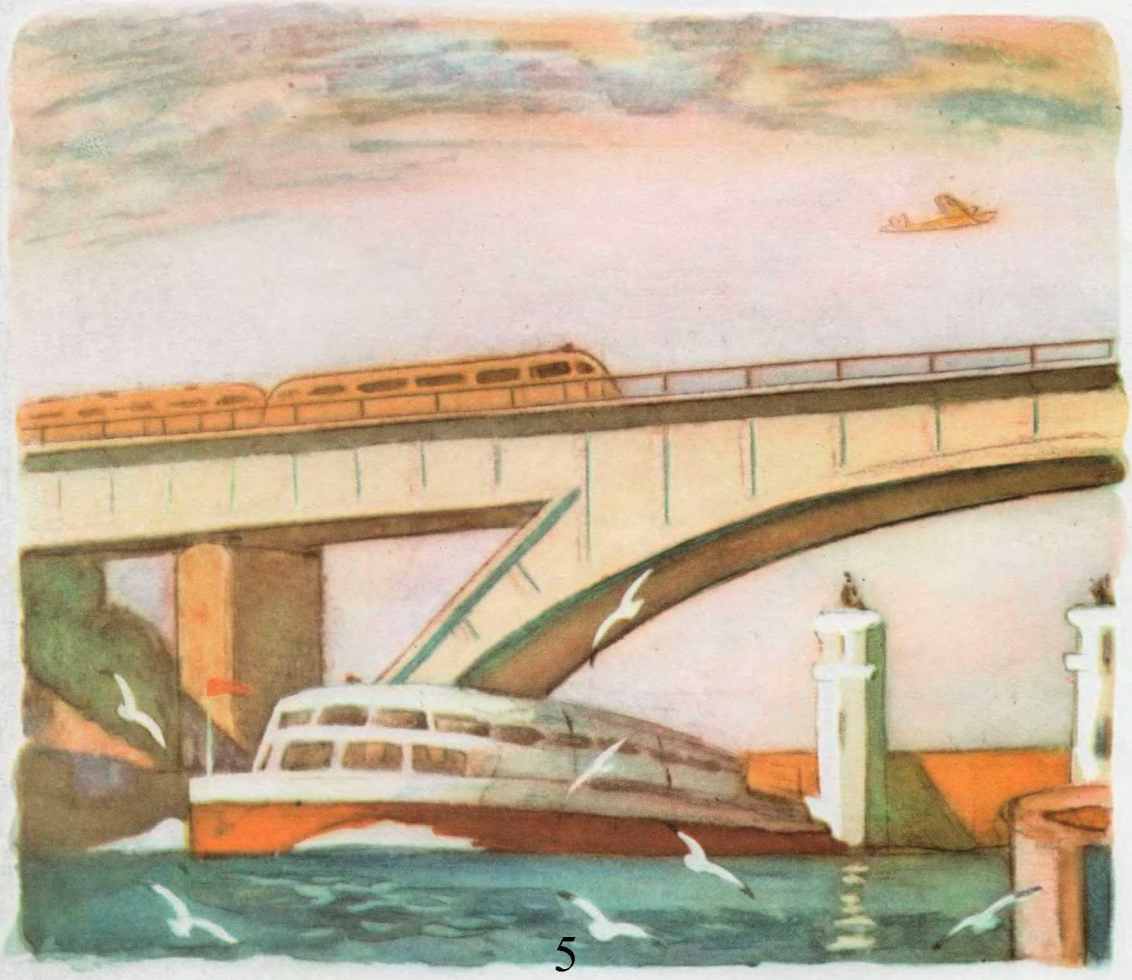
Here comes the postman in Berlin!
The last delivery is in.
His pants are pressed, his shoes are shined.
His general manner is refined,
For that is the condition,
Required of his position.

The people rush in endless streams
Amid the murmur of machines
That hurry out of sight
From morning until night.

An oaken door is opened wide,
The postman bows—and steps inside.
"A Special here for Herr Jitkov
Who lives upon the floor above."

"Just yesterday at five o'clock
His boat for England left the dock!"

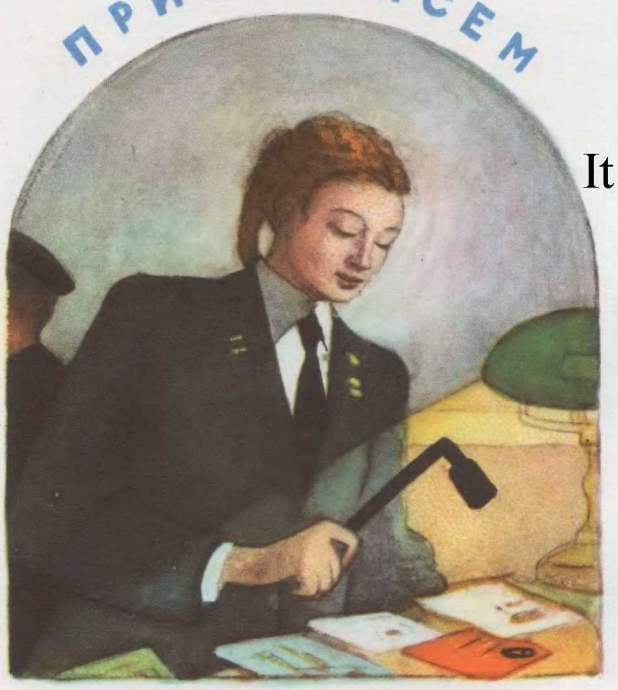




5

The mail
Will fail
To get anywhere
By itself. But in charge of the post—
By rail
Or by sail
Or by airplane mail
It will travel to any far coast.

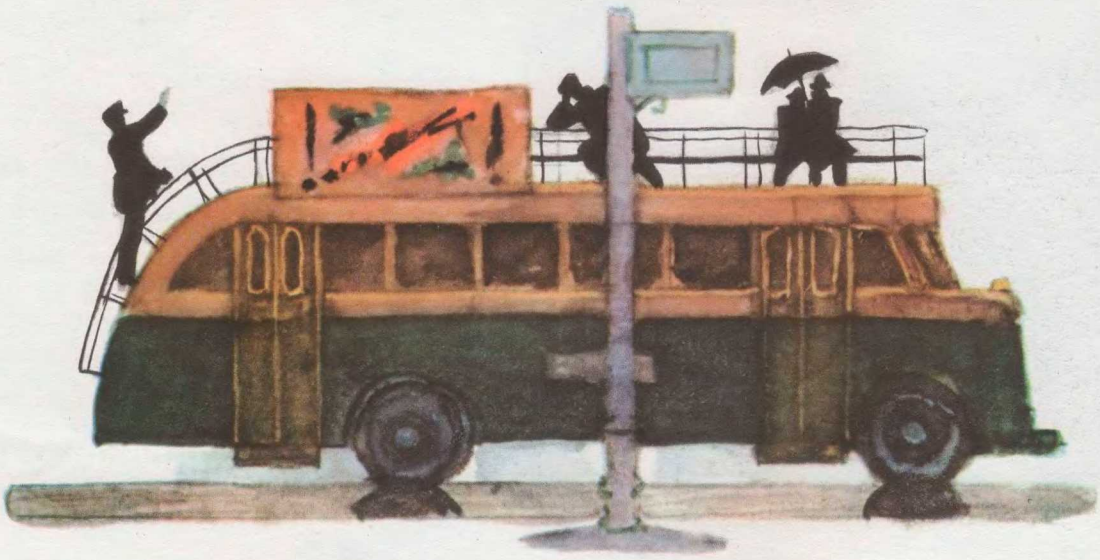
It isn't in need of a tag or
a ticket.
Just buy it a stamp, then lick it
And stick it
In very plain sight
So the postman can see
That the letter has paid him
Its traveling fee.

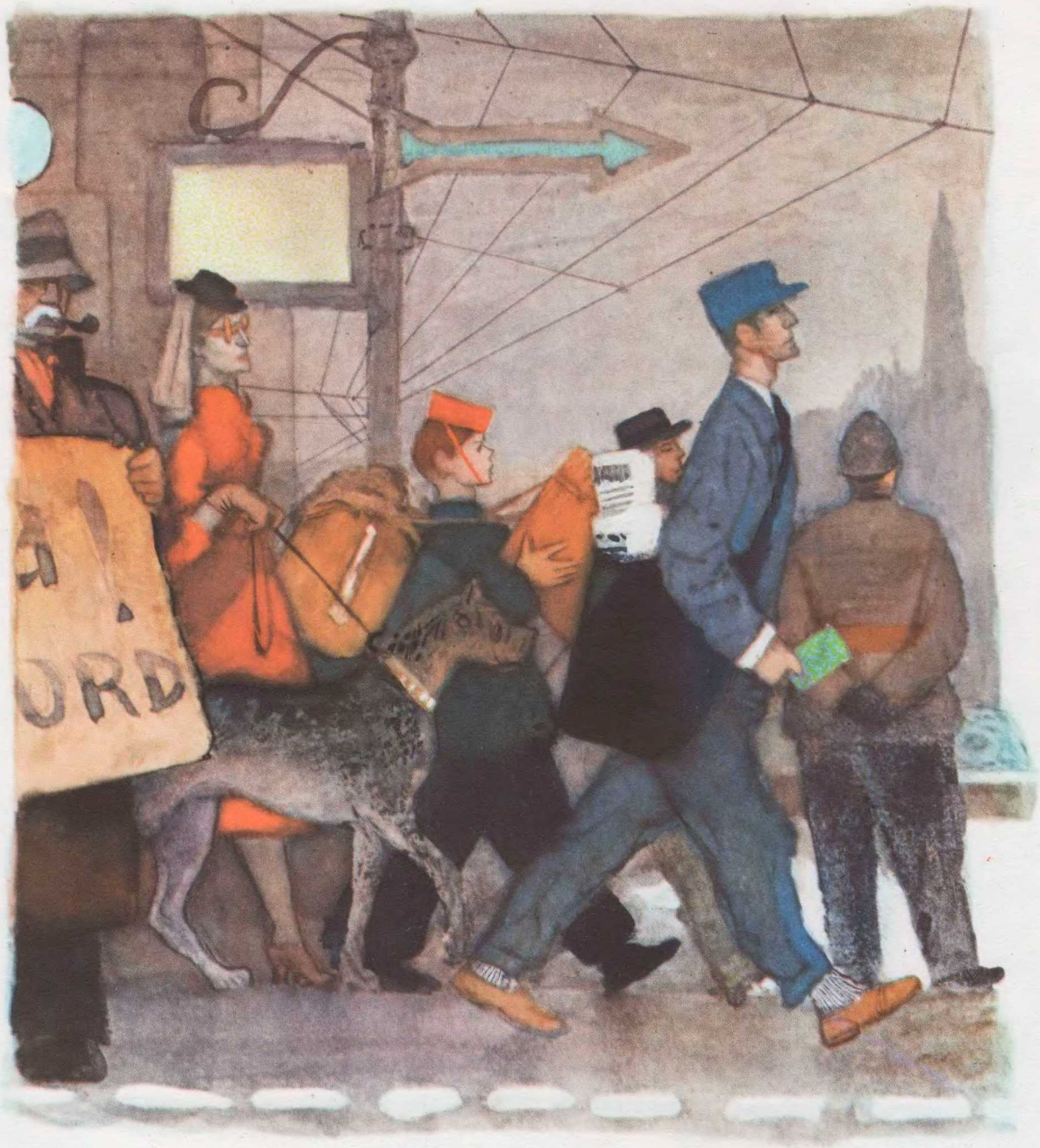


It doesn't need to eat or rest,
It only must repeat:
Special.
England.
London. West.
Eleven Bobkin Street.

6

On London streets, the busses run
By fits and starts, and every one
Is hung with cards and signs
On advertising lines.
From one of them we hear a shout—
"The next is Bobkin Street! All out!"





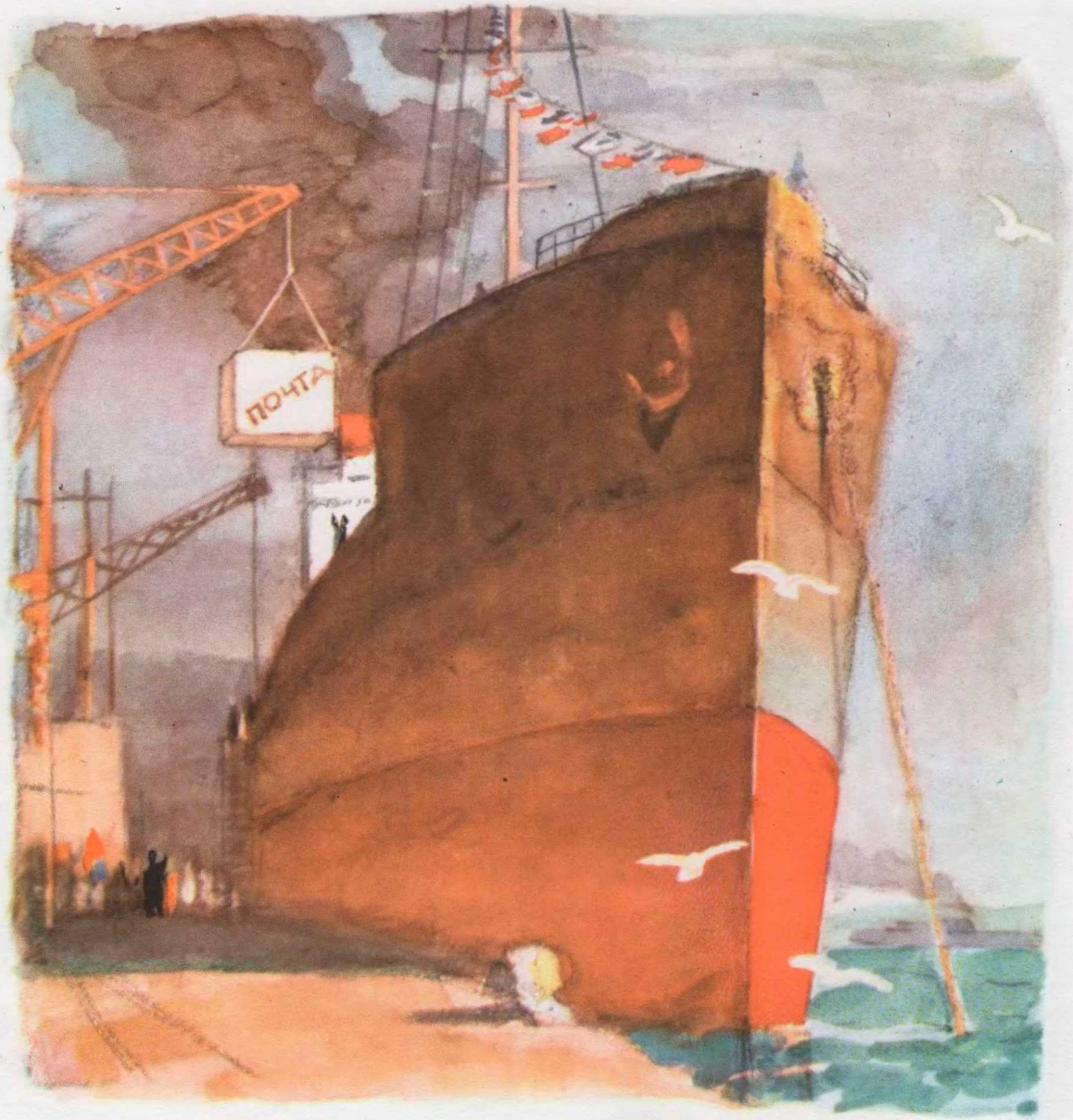
On Bobkin Street! On Bobkin Street!
The letter-man is Mr. Sweet.
His step is light and springy,
His legs are long and stringy.

The house that he is looking for
Has got "11" on the door.
He gives a hurried knock,
And someone turns the lock.

He hands a letter from his pack
Across the narrow sill.
The butler reads it, hands it back—-
"Jitkov is in Brazil!"

7

The ship will be
Upon the sea
Within another minute.
And it will travel westerly
With freight and people in it.



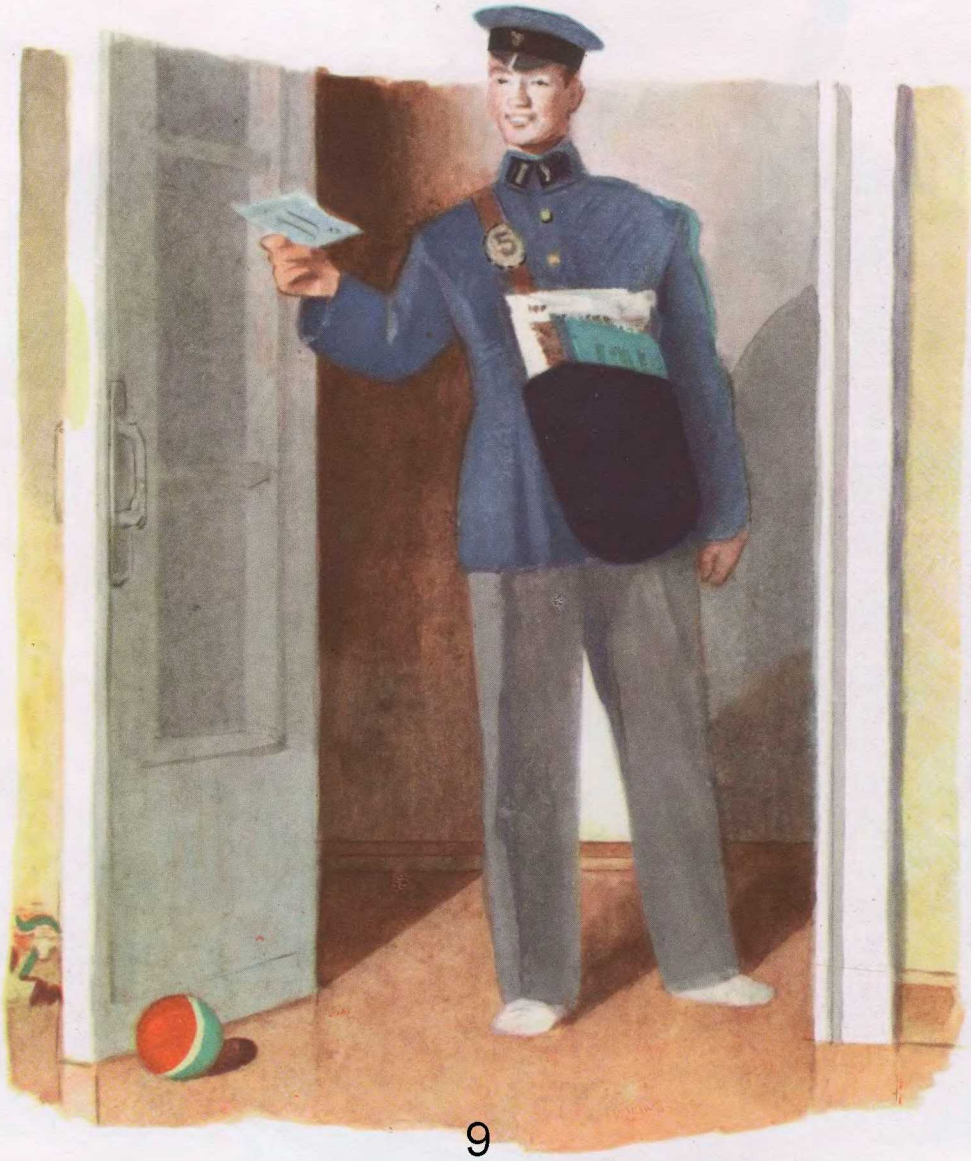
While in motion
On the ocean,
Postmen show no less devotion,
Sorting out the mails,
Behind the steamer rails.

8

Along the streets of Rio,
The palms hang hot and still,
And wearily Don Basilio
Serves letters in Brazil.

An envelope all rumpled up
And crumpled up with wear,
Is clutched in his perspiring hand
As though he didn't care.

Among the scrawls in many hands
That make it look so sad,
A final message now commands:
"Return to Leningrad!"



Who is knocking at my door
With bag behind and badge
before,
In Leningrad's official suit
Of navy blue from cap to boot?
It is he,
It is he,
Who brings the mail to you and[19]
me.

In his hand he brings
once more
The Special that he
brought before.
"Hey, Jitkov! This isn't
mine!
It's a Special! You must
sign!"

10

My neighbour hurried out of bed.
"My! How interesting!" he said.
"Look at this! The postman sent
My letter everywhere I went.

Over land and over sea,
Faithfully in search of me,
It has been to cities on
The Rhine, the Thames, the Amazon!
"To the sole address remaining,
It has come at last to me,
Thanks to postmen uncomplaining,
Muscle-straining men of training!
To the postmen uncomplaining,
Bringing mail to you and me!"

SAMUIL MARSHAK

POSTMAN

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MINI PROGRESS & MINI RADUGA